

Comparative Studies 597.01
Spring 2005

GLOBAL STUDIES OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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Purpose of the Course

In this course, we will employ a variety of approaches in our consideration of contemporary issues in global science and technology studies. Drawing from the (inter)disciplines of anthropology, cultural studies, postcolonial studies, and visual cultural studies, we will evaluate and compare how each of these ways of knowing contributes to our understanding of the relationships between global scientific, technological, and cultural practice.

Our framing questions for the quarter

- ★ How is scientific knowledge produced, legitimated, and contested?
- ★ How does science function as an ideology?
- ★ How do cultural ideologies resonate with (or influence) scientific practice?
- ★ How is scientific practice embedded in – and constitutive of – particular social relations?
- ★ How are distinctions central to modernist, positivist projects destabilized in science studies scholarship? Focus on: science/culture, nature/culture, modern/primitive, fact/fiction
- ★ What is at stake (at the levels of the global, local, personal, political, cultural) in the use of visual technologies and visual representations? How are the distinctions between the levels named above blurred or reified in visual cultural practices?

Course Requirements

1. **Participation.** For the purpose of this class, participation is defined as the practice of making productive, relevant contributions to class discussion *while also* listening to and respecting others' contributions. Talking a lot without engaging with the readings will not raise your participation grade; demonstrating your engagement with course texts and issues, with your fellow classmates, and practicing attentive listening to others will result in a strong participation grade.
2. **Reading/Preparing for discussion.** In order to participate meaningfully in class discussion, you will need to **complete the reading(s) for each class before coming to class**. As you read, try to articulate an opinion, a question, or a response to the reading(s) under consideration. Expect the readings to challenge you. Many of the essays and books we will read are written for academic audiences, and will use terminology with

which you may be unfamiliar. I expect you to notify me or raise questions in class if there are aspects of the reading that you do not understand.

3. **Attendance.** Because participation is integral to the success of our class, attendance is mandatory. For the purpose of this class, “attendance” means coming to class on time and remaining in class for the duration of the class meeting. You are allowed two unexcused absences (no questions asked). After that, each absence will result in the deduction of 5% of your final grade. If you have a documented reason for missing class, please let me know, and I will excuse your absence.
4. **Group facilitation of class (1).** Once during the quarter, you will work with a small group to facilitate discussion about the readings assigned for the day. Your group will be responsible for presenting a brief oral synthesis of the assigned text(s). You will also be responsible for making connections between the text(s) and issues/texts discussed in the course and for developing discussion questions. For your group facilitation, you are encouraged – but not required – to bring in outside material, visual or textual examples, or media.

Your group will be evaluated based upon the following criteria: your preparedness; evidence of your collaboration; the significance of your discussion to the course themes and issues; and the (brief) individual evaluation you will write after the presentation.

5. **Artifact offering (1).** You will sign up to bring an “artifact” to class once in the course of the quarter (think of this as advanced show and tell). Your artifact can take almost any form – it might be a news clipping, a visual object (film clip, video, web site), a book or magazine article, or something else entirely. Be prepared to present your artifact to the class, and to offer some suggestions about how it connects to the course themes or issues (broadly, science and technology in global and cultural contexts). Your artifact discussion should be fairly brief – plan to allocate no more than 10 minutes to the presentation.
6. **Reading responses (4).** In lieu of regular quizzes, I am asking you to turn in four two-page reading responses over the course of the quarter (due dates are noted in the daily schedule). I will provide you with guidelines for writing your responses, and will use these as a way to evaluate your engagement with course texts. If you are unable to turn in a reading response on **one** of the due dates noted in the schedule, you may turn in a “make up” response during the final week of the quarter.
7. **In-class essay (1).** At the course **midterm**, I will ask you to write an in-class essay. You will be given a list of essay prompts in advance, from which you can choose one to write about in class. The in-class essays are designed to allow you to compare and synthesize arguments or issues across course texts.

Final grade breakdown

Grades will be determined using the following percentages:

Participation and attendance (includes in-class exercises): 20%

Group Facilitation: 15%

Artifact offering: 10%

Reading responses: 40% (4 at 10% each)

In-class essay: 15%

Disabilities

If you feel you need an accommodation based on the impact of an impairment or disability, please contact me privately as soon as possible. I will be happy to work with the office of Disability Services to coordinate accommodations for students with documented disabilities. If you want to contact the office of Disability Services, you can visit 150 Pomerene Hall or call 292-3307.

Academic Misconduct

Plagiarism is the representation of another's works or ideas as one's own, and/or the undocumented, unacknowledged use of quoted or paraphrased work by another person. In accordance with university policy, all cases of suspected plagiarism will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct.

Required Texts: Available at SBX or via the library (check OSU, OhioLINK, and the Columbus Metropolitan Library). You might also look for these books (used or new) on alibris.com, amazon.com, or powells.com.

* Several course essays are posted online (WebCT); they are noted with an asterisk (*)

Goodman, Heath, and Lindee, *Genetic Nature/Culture: Anthropology and Science Beyond the Two Culture Divide*

Vaidhyathan, *The Anarchist in the Library: How Freedom and Control are Hacking the Real World and Crashing the System*

Sturken and Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture*

Mirzoeff, *Watching Babylon: The Iraq War and Global Visual Culture*

★ Daily Schedule ★

[Subject to change; Readings are listed on the date they will be discussed in class]

3.28 Introductions

Science and/as Ideology

3.30 *Kuhn, "The Route to Normal Science" and selected definitions from *Keywords*

4.4 *Latour, "Opening Pandora's Black Box"
*Haraway, "Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium"

4.6 *Gusterson, "Becoming a Weapons Scientist"

Politics of Scientific Knowledge Production / Genetic Politics

4.11 *Genetic Nature/Culture*, chapters by Lindee and Rose
Group One presents
★ Reading response I due

4.13 *Genetic Nature/Culture*, chapter by Haraway

- 4.18 *Genetic Nature/Culture*, chapters by Santos and Heller & Escobar
Group Two presents
- 4.20 *Davis, “Genetic Research and Communal Narratives”
*Shriver and Kittles, “Genetic ancestry and the search for personalized genetic histories”
- 4.25 Class cancelled (I will be out of town)
★ Reading response 2 due in my mailbox, Hagery 451, by 5 p.m.

Postcolonial Critiques

- 4.27 In-class essay
- 5.2 *Gupta, chapters 1 & 2
Group Three presents
- 5.4 *Abraham, “Postcolonial Science, Big Science, and Landscape”

Information: Freedom/Control

- 5.9 *The Anarchist in the Library*, Intro – ch. 3
Group Four presents
★ Reading response 3 due
- 5.11 *The Anarchist in the Library*, chapters 9-conclusion
Group Five presents

Weblogs, Warblogs and (counter)public spheres

- 5.16 *The Anarchist in the Library*, Conclusion
Thompson, ““Weblogs, warblogs, the public sphere, and bubbles”
http://transformations.cqu.edu.au/journal/issue_07/article_02.shtml
Group Six presents

Global Visual Culture Studies

- 5.18 *Practices of Looking*, chapter 1 (Recommended: ch. 2)
- 5.23 *Practices of Looking*, chapters 3 and 9
Group Seven presents
★ Reading response 4 due
- 5.25 *Watching Babylon*, chapters TBA
- 5.30 Holiday – no class meeting (please read ahead for Wednesday)
- 6.1 *Watching Babylon*, chapters TBA
Group Eight presents
★ Make-up reading response due (if needed)